

**Middletown Public Schools**

**Middletown, Rhode Island**

**September 18, 2008**

**7:00 p.m. – Regular Meeting**

**MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM**

**Members Present: Michael F. Crowley, Jr., Chairman**

**Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chair**

**William Coogan arrived at 7:28 p.m.**

**Edward K. Draper**

**Liana F. Fenton**

**Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools**

**Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent Catherine McLeish,  
Business Manager**

**Edward Collins, Director of Facilities**

**The regular meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Michael Crowley. Administrative staff members present were Steven Ruscito, Stephen Ponte, Michelle Fonseca and Vincent Giuliano. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **“Student Capstone Presentation – Breast Cancer”**

**Emily Jones, MHS Junior, presented her Capstone project on “Breast Cancer Awareness”.**

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**No “Student Activities” for September 18, 2008.**

## **INFORMATION**

**Mrs. Kraeger noted items of information in the School Committee Package:**

- NECAP Testing Window – All dates are similar throughout the district.**

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## **CORRESPONDENCE**

**No “Correspondence” for September 18, 2008.**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) Theresa Spengler. To approve the Consent Agenda. Unanimous vote.**

- Approval of Minutes of August 28, 2008 Regular School Committee Meeting**
- Approval of Invoice Register, dated August 22, 2008, in the amount of \$629,412.37**
- Approval of Invoice Register, dated September 2, 2008, in the amount of \$165,471.37**
- Approval of Special Grants Register, dated August 22, 2008, in the amount of \$18,565.12**
- Approval of Special Grants Register, dated September 8, 2008, in the amount of \$4,046.64**

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATION ON PERSONNEL**

## **APPOINTMENTS**

**John Hanos 4 Math Teacher, Middletown High School (One Year Only)**

**Peter Wood Director of Technology**

**RESIGNATION**

**Lois Schneller Census Clerk, Regional Special Education**

**Patrick Cleary Custodian**

**Tracey Rutledge Part-Time Teacher Assistant, J.F. Kennedy School**

**FROM .4 TO .6**

**Gail A. Sullivan-McCune Computer Science, Middletown High School**

**FROM .4 TO 1.0**

**Meaghan Corr Grade 7, ELA**

**FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

**Joanne Reilly-Chaves Grade Four, Forest Avenue School**

**From September 2, 2008 to approximately January 5, 2009**

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## **RECALL RIGHTS TERMINATED**

**Ronda L. Schuster .5 Special Education Resource**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **STORM DRAIN TIE-IN**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the request to tie-in to the storm drain at Middletown High School, pending Town Council approval. Unanimous vote.**

### **ADMINISTRATION SERVICES 403(b)**

**MOTION: 1) Edward Draper, 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee endorse the RIASBO award to “Gatekeeper Administration and Consulting LLC” to administer the 403(b) program. Unanimous vote.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**•Core Committee – A letter will be sent to committee members to reconvene the group. A meeting will be held at Gaudet School or the**

**new Forest Avenue School Learning Center. The next phase of the Fielding Nair Report will be discussed. The School Committee needs have to go before the Town Council to access impact fees.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**•Early Childhood – Mr. Crowley suggested revisiting the policy on Kindergarten registration. He feels that the Department of Education made decision regarding the cut-off date and then modified it, leaving school departments in the position of not having a solid answer for parents. An Early Childhood group should be formed to examine Middletown’s policy. Many communities offer a waiver and test a child for readiness if requested by the parent. Mrs. Spengler said that no matter what the cutoff date is, there will be unhappy parents. Mrs. Fenton said the school department should explore the possibility of offering preschool programs. Other members felt that we could not hire preschool teachers when classroom teachers are being eliminated. Mrs. Kraeger said it is our hope to present a policy by the May School Committee Meeting.**

**•Linden School – The Middletown Education Collaborative has offered to do a garage sale of the contents of Linden school, with proceeds going to teachers for grants at schools.**

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## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS**

•**CURRICULUM** – Mrs. Savastano discussed Opening Day items that focused on “Supporting the Strategic Plan Through Instruction, Assessment and Communication.”

•**FINANCIAL** – Mrs. Kraeger said final approval of the budget in will take place in October. Mrs. McLeish is still working on revising the budget and getting to the bottom line. Mrs. Kraeger will attend the Impact Aid Conference in Washington, DC next week.

•**FACILITIES** – Mr. Collins explained that we have locked into a gas price that is well under the standard price for the upcoming winter.

**Bussing** – Most busses are full. The schedule is tight because of the reduction of one bus. On Monday, the Town will begin a major sewer project on West Main Road, Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for two months. ConnectEd will send out a message that busses will be late, especially J.F. Kennedy School. 95% of busses will be affected. Ms. Abromitis has sent home a letter asking parents to drop off and pick in rear of the school.

**Sports Advisory Committee** – Mr. Collins will attend the next Boosters Meeting.

**Forest Avenue School** – On Monday, the new wing at Forest Avenue School opened up. Mr. Collins said his crew did a great job.

•**ENROLLMENT** – Mrs. Kraeger gave a PowerPoint Presentation on

enrollment from 2003 to day. Enrollment has declined from 2669 students in 2003 to 2365 student currently. The teacher contract states that, “Whenever possible, no classroom shall have more than twenty-five (25) pupils assigned to one (1) teacher” and “Whenever possible, Grades K-2 shall not have more than twenty (20) pupils per teacher.”

Mrs. Kraeger said that the school department is faced with many issues on class size due to budget restraints. Options to address class size include:

- o Adding a new Grade 3 at Aquidneck or Forest Avenue School. This would require students to be moved out of home schools.
- o Increase a .6 at Gaudet School to enable an additional grade 6 teacher.
- o Create a grade 3/grade 4 split.
- o Move out of district students back to their home school. This would solve Kindergarten and grade 1 problem, but not grade 3.
- o Close a grade 4 and open a grade 3.
- o Restore (3) 3-hour teacher assistants

The Superintendent’s recommendations include:

- o Provide Literacy Teacher at JFK & FA provide support during literacy block
- o Every six days provide additional “special time” (especially in grade 3 at Aquidneck, JFK and Forest Avenue
- o Most of the Grade 3 classes are supported by a Special Ed teacher in a co-teaching model



oCurrently all elementary teachers receive an extra 30 minute planning because we have increased health instruction

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•OPENING OF SCHOOL – Mrs. Kraeger thanked everyone and said it was one of the best openings. By the 3rd day, busses were on schedule. Opening Day workshops were very informational.

MOTION: 1)Theresa Spengler, 2) Edward Draper. That the School Committee receive the Superintendent's Reports. Unanimous vote.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

Mrs. Fenton attended the Governors K-14 conference and discussed what is going on in the state.

Mr. Crowley attended several "Three Cups of Tea" discussions.

## **ADJOURN FROM MEETING**

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To adjourn from

**School Committee Meeting at 8:25 p.m. Unanimous vote.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk**